

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR MICRO-JET ENABLED, LOW-ENERGY ION GENERATION AND TRANSPORT IN PLASMA PROCESSING

ABSTRACT

[0046] A method for creating and transporting low-energy ions for use in plasma processing of a semiconductor wafer is disclosed. In an exemplary embodiment of the invention, the method includes generating plasma from a gas species to produce a plasma exhaust. The plasma exhaust is then introduced into a processing chamber containing the wafer. The ion content of the plasma exhaust is enhanced by activating a supplemental ion source as the plasma is introduced into the processing chamber, thereby creating a primary plasma discharge therein. Then, the primary plasma discharge is directed into a baffle plate assembly, thereby creating a secondary plasma discharge exiting the baffle plate assembly. The strength of an electric field exerted on ions contained in the secondary plasma discharge is reduced. In so doing, the reduced strength of the electric field causes the ions to bombard the wafer at an energy insufficient to cause damage to semiconductor devices formed on the wafer.